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(56) Documents cited

GB 2128581 A

GB 1589395 A

GB 1510638 A

EP 0225301 A1

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(54) Labelling of packages, and labels therefor

(57) A package 10 is provided with a primary label 16 applied thereto by means of adhesive 26. The primary label comprises a body sheet 18 to one side of which is applied the adhesive enabling the attachment of the label to the package. The printed information 24 of the label refers to the contents or goods in the package, and is trapped between the label body sheet and the adhesive whereby the printing is protected from abrasion. The label body sheet either is transparent so that the information can be viewed therethrough, or the adhesive and package are sufficiently transparent so that the information on the label can be viewed through the package and the adhesive.

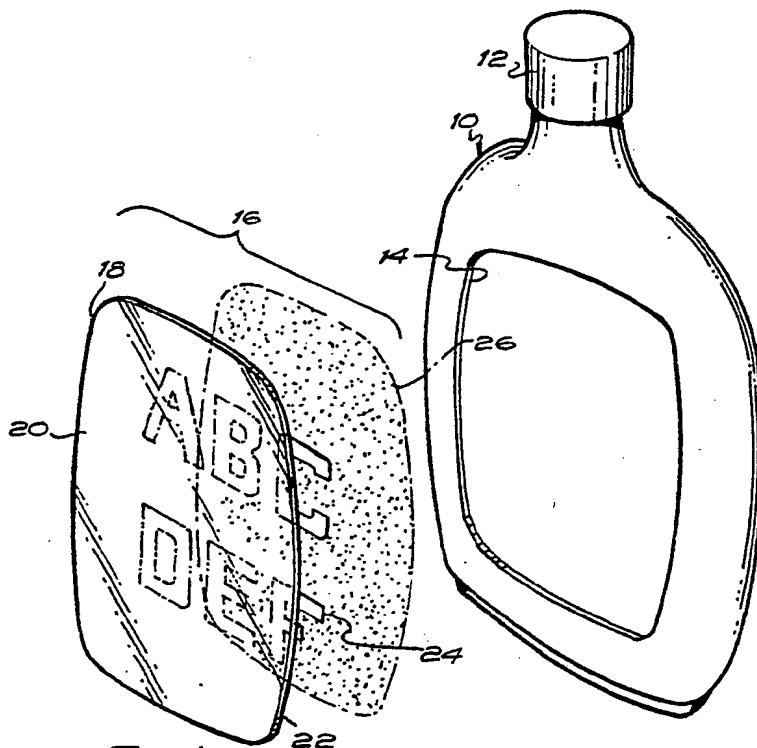


FIG. 1

At least one drawing originally filed was informal and the print reproduced here is taken from a later filed formal copy.

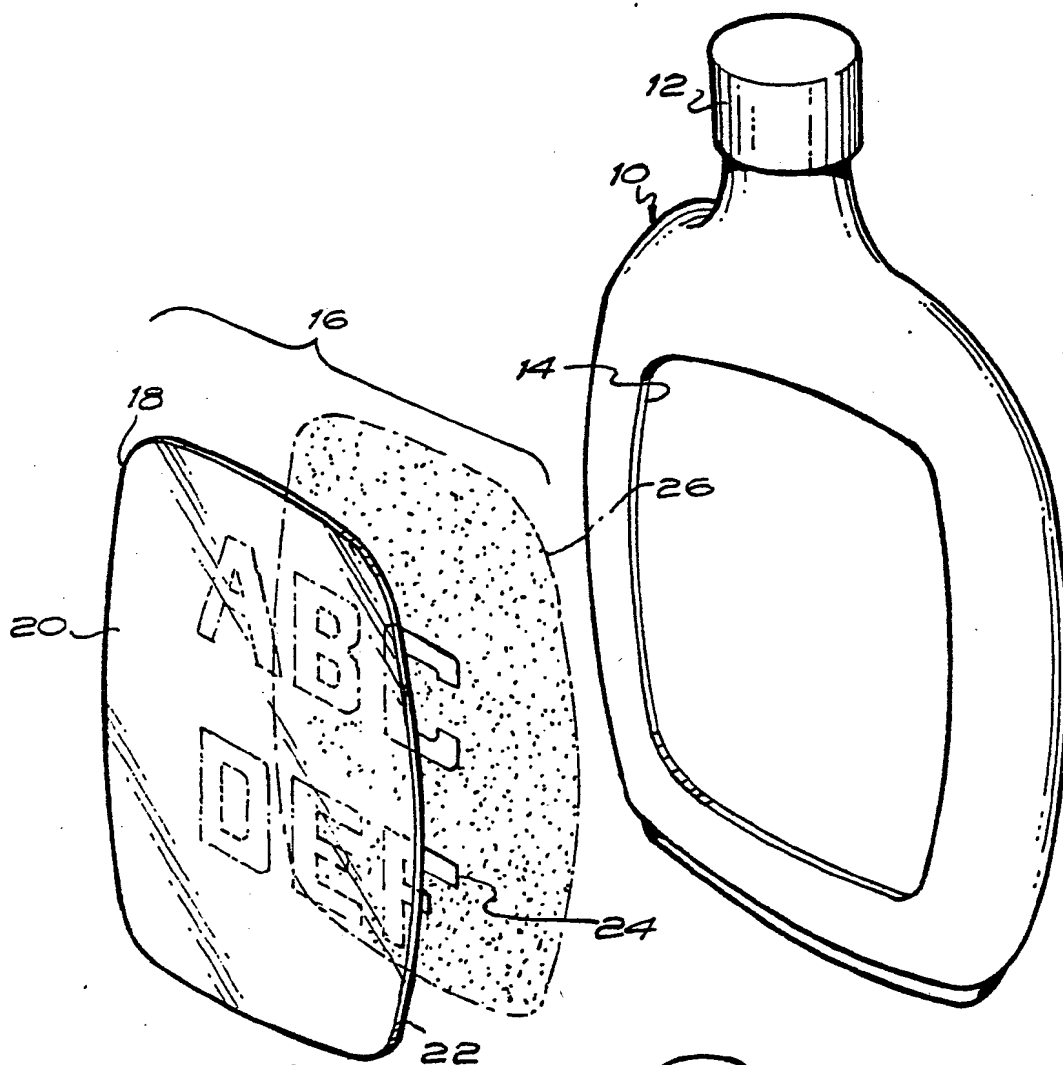


FIG. 1

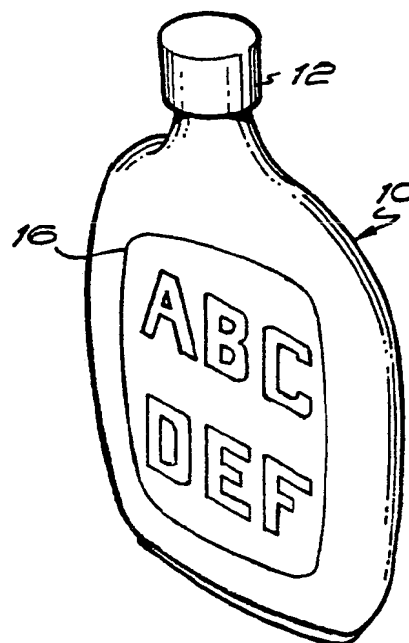


FIG. 2

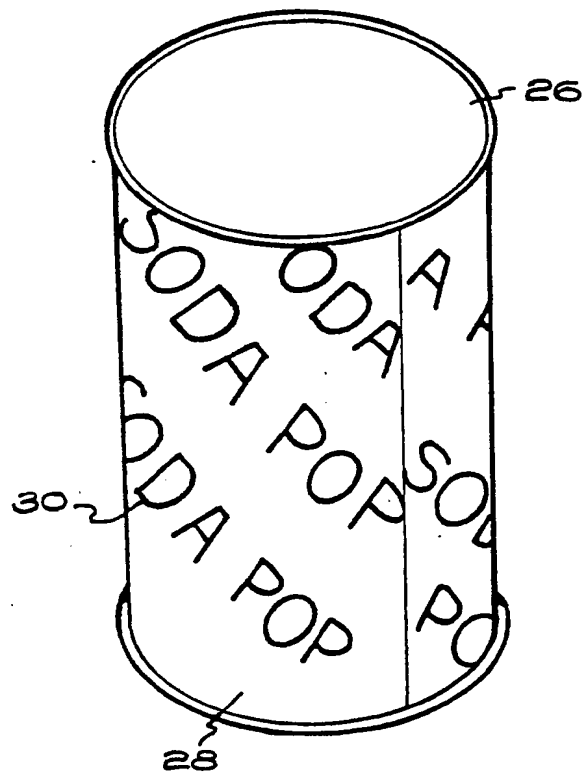


FIG. 3.

Improvements Relating to the Labelling of Packages, and  
Labels therefor-----

This invention relates to the labelling of packages, and in particular concerns a labelling system whereby adhesive labels applied to packages for the purposes of identifying the goods contained therein will be arranged so that the printing on the labels is protected from external scuffing and scratching.

The present invention is concerned with what are known as "primary" labels of packages being the labels which are applied to the packages for the purposes of identifying the goods or contents. There are known so-called "secondary" labels which may be applied to packages in addition to the primary labels, but the secondary labels usually comprise small hand applied labels for indicating items such as price or "consume by" information. Secondary labels may be applied over previously applied secondary labels where for example the price has changed since the first or previous secondary label was applied, but this is seldom or never the case with primary labels.

The present invention is primarily concerned with the application of the primary labels to packages, being labels which indicate the goods or contents of the package, and typically, primary labels may be applied to bottles, cans and other rigid type containers but primary labels may also be applied to non-rigid containers such as squeezable bottles and bags containing for example biscuits or buns. The primary labels may also be applied to plastic films used as lidding for food and other trays and containers.

For the application of primary labels, application machinery is used because the primary labels are always

required to be applied accurately and at high speed, making manual application nowadays completely redundant.

In accordance with the present invention, the primary label is arranged so that the printing thereof will be protected, and in accordance with the invention there is provided a package containing goods or contents, to which at least one primary label has been applied, said primary label comprising a label body sheet carrying printed information indicative of the packaged goods or contents, and adhesive between the body sheet and package securing the label body sheet to the package, said printing being located between the adhesive and the body sheet, the label body sheet either being transparent so that the printed information can be viewed therethrough, or the package being transparent at least to such an extent to enable the printed information to be viewed at least through the package and the adhesive.

With the arrangement of the present invention, it will be appreciated that the label information is protected from scratching or scuffing in that it will in fact be under the label body sheet.

Preferably, the label body sheet will be of a transparent plastics material, or transparent paper, such as cellulose acetate, more commonly known as cellophane, having a front side and a rear side, the printed information concerning the package contents or goods being applied to the rear side of the label, and the adhesive being applied to the rear side over the printing, trapping the printing between the adhesive and body sheet. The adhesive may be a pressure sensitive adhesive.

The invention also provides a roll of primary adhesive labels for application to packages as aforesaid, said roll of labels having the primary label information printed at regular intervals thereon, and the labels being wound into roll form without a backing sheet so that the adhesive contacts the front side of the web making up the label body sheets, said front side having a release characteristic enabling the adhesive to be readily detached therefrom when the labels are being applied by label application machinery to the packages.

The label application machinery may be of the nature described in our European Patent Applications Nos. 82306505.7, 86114891.4 and 87103761.0.

To enable the web of labels to be rolled into reel form, a layer of silicone release material may be applied to the front side thereof, by any conventional method.

When the label body sheets are of opaque material, there may be printing concerning the package contents or goods on both sides of the label, and on the rear side the printed information is covered by the adhesive, whilst on the front side the label information is covered by said silicone release material. Such a label would be for use for example with a transparent or translucent bottle containing liquid contents which also are transparent or translucent, so that the printing on the rear of the label applied to the package can be viewed through the package. The printing will be applied so as to be readable either through the label or through the package as appropriate.

Embodiments of the invention will now be described, by way of example, with reference to the accompanying

diagrammatic drawings, wherein:-

Fig. 1 is an exploded view of a package comprising a bottle and primary label therefor;

Fig. 2 is a perspective view of the bottle and label arrangement of Fig. 1 showing the label applied; and

Fig. 3 is a perspective view of a different form of package with a label applied thereto in accordance with another embodiment of the invention.

Referring to the drawings, in Fig. 1 is shown a plastic bottle 10 provided with a closure cap 12. The bottle is somewhat ovaloid in cross-section, and on a face thereof has a recess 14 for receiving a label 16 which is a primary label for identifying the bottle contents. The bottle may be for holding syrup, tomato sauce, shampoo or the like. It is to be mentioned that the bottle 10 need not have a recess for the label and indeed more often than not, there will be no such recess.

The label 16 comprises a label body sheet 18 which in this case is shaped to the shape of the recess 14 and the body sheet has a front side 20 and a rear side 22. To the rear side 22 is applied printing 24 describing the bottle contents, and over the printing is applied an adhesive 26 so that the printing becomes trapped between the body sheet 20 and the adhesive 26. In this example the adhesive is shown as having been applied over the entire surface of the label, but it is not necessary that this should be so. For example the label may be provided with a section which can be removed, such section being defined by tear lines, the removal being possible after the label has been applied to the bottle. The letters A to F have been indicated

as the printing in this example, but it will be appreciated that this is for the purposes of illustration only, and any form of printing identifying the product contained in the bottle may be utilised. The printing may furthermore be in a single or multi colour form.

In Fig. 1 the label 16 is in fact shown in exploded perspective view, but it will be appreciated that the adhesive 26 will be applied to the rear side 22 of the label body 20 with the printing 24 trapped between the body and the adhesive. This arrangement of printing provides the advantage that when the label is applied to the bottle as shown in Fig. 2, the printing is protected by the body 20, and any scratching or scuffing on the front side 20 of the label body 18 will not impair the printing. In the example illustrated the body sheet 18 is of transparent or translucent material and the printing is applied so that it can be viewed through the body sheet 18 when the label is applied to the bottle. However it is possible to make the sheet 18 of opaque material when the bottle 10 and its contents are such that the printing 24 can be viewed through the bottle and said contents. In this arrangement, it may be possible to provide printing on the surface 20 in addition to the surface 22. The printing on the surface 20 in such arrangement may be protected by means of an overcoat of release material.

The labels are applied to the bottles from a web of such labels and by high speed application machinery for example of the type set forth in the aforesaid European Patent Applications and during such application, the individual labels 16 are cut from the web and applied to the bottle. When the outer surface 20 of the label web has a release coating applied thereto, then the web can be rolled into reel form without the use of a



backing sheet.

The invention also therefore provides a reel of labels in web form with the printed material of the labels trapped between adhesive and the web stock, and preferably the opposite side of the web stock has a release characteristic so that the web can be wound into reel form without the use of a backing web.

Fig. 3 shows another embodiment of the invention. The package or container in this example is a metal can 26 of cylindrical form, and the label 28 is a full wrap label which extends around the entire cylindrical surface of the can. The label is of similar construction to the label 16 shown in Fig. 1 in that there is an outer body sheet to the rear of which is applied the printing 30, and over the printing is applied the adhesive by which the label is secured to the can body 26. In the example illustrated in Fig. 3, the printed material 30 repeats and is applied over all of the label and whilst this is a desirable arrangement, it is not intended that this be considered as the only arrangement possible. As will be appreciated however, the application of a label to a can as illustrated in Fig. 3 with the printing protected by the outer body sheet of the label provides a package with the desirable characteristic that the printing is protected from being scuffed or scratched during handling and transfer.

When the body sheet is of transparent material, any suitable plastics or paper material or laminate can be used and typically any of the materials in the following list, which is not to be considered exhaustive, may be employed:-

polyester  
polypropylene  
polystyrene, P.V.C.  
polyethylene  
cellulose acetate

When the label body sheet is opaque, it may be of paper or plastics material as required.

CLAIMS

1. A package containing goods or contents, to which at least one primary label has been applied, said primary label comprising a label body sheet carrying printed information indicative of the packaged goods or contents, and adhesive between the body sheet and package securing the label body sheet to the package, said printing being located between the adhesive and the body sheet, the label body sheet either being transparent so that the printed information can be viewed therethrough, or the package being transparent at least to such an extent to enable the printed information to be viewed at least through the package and the adhesive.
2. A package according to Claim 1, wherein the label body sheet is of transparent plastics material having a front side and a rear side, the printed information concerning the package contents or goods being applied to the rear side of the label, and the adhesive being applied to the rear side over the printing, trapping the printing between the adhesive and body sheet.
3. A package according to Claim 2, wherein the adhesive is a pressure sensitive adhesive.
4. A package according to Claim 1 wherein the label body sheet is opaque, and there is additional printed information on the surface of the label facing away from the package contents, said additional printed information being covered by a coating of silicone release material.
5. A package according to any of Claims 1 to 4, wherein the label body sheet is in at least two sections defined by a weakening line or lines and one

of the sections is adhered to the package by the adhesive whilst the other section is not and can be removed from the package by tearing along said weakening line or lines.

6. A package according to any preceding claim, wherein the package is a bottle and the label is a patch label.

7. A package according to any of Claims 1 to 6, wherein the package is a cylindrical container and the label is a complete wrap round label.

8. A package containing goods or contents to which at least one primary label has been applied substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to the accompanying drawings.

9. A roll of primary adhesive labels for application to packages according to Claim 1, said roll of labels having the primary label information printed at regular intervals thereon, and the labels being wound into roll form without a backing sheet so that the adhesive contacts the front side of the web making up the label body sheets, said front side having a release characteristic enabling the adhesive to be readily detached therefrom when the labels are being applied by label application machinery to the packages.

10. A roll of primary labels according to Claim 9, substantially as hereinbefore described.